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jurious and domineering alliance of Church and State.

We have been told, that the people in the Presbyterian church retain the power. By their choice of elders to the ensuing Synod, let them prove whether this power is an empty name. The contest has hitherto chiefly been between the ministers: it appears suitable, that the people, or their representatives, the elders, should decide the question, whether the Synod shall be an independent body, or under the hampering influence of pensions, degenerate into a political club, promoting in their deliberations and decisions, on cases which come before them, the views of government, and crouching to the hands which in part feed them out of the public purse. The following concluding remarks of the pamphlet, on the subject of Elders, are important at the present crisis.

"In respect to the Presbyterian people, I say that they are not without interest in this business, and have a right to take a part in its decision, by their *Elders*. The Elders are the *guardians* of their ecclesiastical rights and privileges, and an essential part of their assemblies, whether legislative or judicial. In all cases, therefore, relative to doctrine, worship, and discipline, as it is their right, it is also their duty to attend, deliberate, speak, and vote, in common with the Ministers. It is, therefore, my earnest wish, and heartfelt desire that this right may be exercised, and this duty performed, in its utmost extent, at the ensuing meeting of Synod; and that every congregation may, not only send to it an Elder, but the Elder best acquainted with the rights, and most firmly attached to the real honor and interests of the Presbyterian cause."

K.

CORRESPONDENCE.

The following letter came too late for insertion among the original communications. Though not exactly suited to this place, at the request of our correspondent, to prevent delay, we make room for it.

To the Proprietors of the Belfast Magazine.

IN the Belfast News-Letter of Tuesday the 18th inst. the following article appears. "The Rev. William Vessey, delegate from the London Society for promoting

Christianity amongst the Jews, preached a sermon for the benefit of that institution, on Sunday the 9th current, in the Rev. Wm. Skelly's church, Donaghadee; where the collection amounted to £4 8s. 5d.; and on Sunday last, at Bangor, in the church of the Rev. Mr. Woods, collection £3 5s. 4d. in aid of the same funds!"

On reading the above the following queries were suggested.

1st. If there are any poor in those parishes, did not the above collection rob them of at least a part of what they would otherwise have received?

2d. How many Jews have been *really* converted to the Christian faith by such means, and what sums have been expended thereon; since it would be very desirable to know the price of a Jew's conversion?

3d. How much of the above two sums of £4 8s. 5d. and £3 5s. 4d. will remain to the Missionary Fund, after deducting the Rev. preacher's travelling expenses for coach-hire, eating and drinking &c. &c., and how far will the nett proceeds go in the conversion of one Jew?

7th. Are converted Jews more remarkable for piety, or better members of society, *after* than *before* such conversion?

5th. The proposed conversion of Jews must be effected either by conviction or by pecuniary inducement; if by the former mode, have not all the possible arguments been already exhausted without effect? If by the latter mode, may not the sincerity of such converts be justly questioned?

6th. As there are many sects of Christians, all differing more or less from each other on points of faith which each deem essential to salvation, surely the Jew converts should be at liberty to make their election in a matter of the last importance. Supposing them to choose the Catholic persuasion, would not this absurdity follow, as the law stands at present, that we might with one hand bribe the Jews to become Catholics, and with the other oppress them for being so?

7th. We are certainly much obliged to these Rev. missionaries for their kind annual visits to this country; but as there are no Jews here to be converted by their Sermons, the collection of money must be their only object. And since it is well known, that amongst the circumcised, "de monish are velcome efery vere," would it not be an economical plan for the Missionary Society to open a negotiation with the chiefs, and High-priests of the several synagogues,

for the wholesale conversion of all the 12 tribes at once. A more advantageous bargain might thus be obtained, than by higgling from time for the conversion of a few stragglers; and would have the double advantage of saving souls and saving money at one and the same time?

8th. Until satisfactory answers could be

had to these queries, would it not be prudent to discontinue the practice of levying contributions off the credulous public, for the use of total strangers; especially as there is no security against misapplication, and in this instance to "let charity begin at home?"

XX.

COMMERCIAL REPORT.

DURING this month, those concerned in the linen trade, especially that portion of it interested in the export to foreign markets, have been much alarmed by a plan which was in agitation at the Board of trade in London, to get the duty of 15 per cent. removed from foreign linens, which they now pay on exportation, after having been warehoused and bonded in Great Britain, as it appeared that such a plan would prove eminently injurious to the linen trade, already in so declining a state, and prevent a trade, which has opened to a considerable extent, of sending Irish linens to foreign markets, made up in the manner of those of the continent of Europe; for Irish linens even with this protecting duty of 15 per cent. are found to enter with difficulty into competition with the foreign. The advocates for the measure pleaded, that foreign linens would find their way into Spanish and Portuguese America, without coming thro' Great Britain, if the North of Europe remained open to export; that British merchants would lose the trade without the manufacturers being able to retain it, and that imperial policy required government, under present circumstances to favour the trade with Russia, and the north of Germany. The Irish and Scotch merchants however prevailed, and the Board of trade have relinquished the plan for the present. The Board of trade appear to usurp extensive functions, for in the discussion on the subject, they acted as the deliberative body, and little was said of parliament, which however must have been called on for form's sake to affix the sanction of legislative enactment, if the measure had been resolved on by the board. This establishment of a new indirect body in legislation affords a proof of a change less free in the constitution, which has been gradually taking place of late years and would be matter of regret if the house of Commons, which ought to contain a full and free representation of the democratic part of the constitution, were in reality what they appear in name, but as things are, the independent part of the nation will feel less indignation, if, in the progress of the present course, Parliament should hereafter very generally be called on merely to register the edicts of the Board of trade. Reform can alone raise the proper dignity of Parliament. Statesmen seldom meddle with affairs of trade without doing injury, and merchants too frequently in their application to men in power, approach more as humble supplicants, than as petitioners acting with the independence of freemen, and proclaiming to them unwelcome truths. Such would approach the men in office, and say to them, "Leave trade to itself, merchants will better find the proper channels without your officious interference. You only mar what you touch, by your system of licences, and by your duties, and bounties counteracting each other. Our linens would go cheaper to market, and meet foreign linens in the field of fair competition, were it not for the burden of taxes in these countries. You nominally exempt articles for the linen manufacture from duty, but your indirect taxes in support of your impolitic and unnecessary wars, bear heavily on every one concerned in all the branches of the manufacture, and they must lay their increased expences on the articles in which they deal. Hence we cannot meet the Germans and Russians, who if they have less of the semblance of liberty, pay less taxes; food is consequently cheaper and they can afford to sell their manufactures lower."

The importation of cambricks into London from France and Holland, has of late been very large.

Notwithstanding all difficulties, a pretty abundant supply of flaxseed has been received this season. The prices altho' high, were lower than had been expected, and the dreams of some who attempted to monopolize the article were not realized. Ia